

(2) shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the member's home or regular place of business in the performance of services for the Committee.

(g) SUPPORT AND RECORDS MAINTENANCE.—The Administrator—

(1) shall provide administrative and technical support for the Advisory Committee; and

(2) shall maintain the records of the Advisory Committee.

(h) FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall apply to the Advisory Committee only to the extent that the provisions of such Act do not conflict with the requirements of this section.

SEC. 07. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the Mineral Commodity Information Administration established by this title.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The term “Advisory Committee” means the Mineral Commodity Advisory Committee established by this title.

SEC. 08. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out this title \$30,000,000 for each of the fiscal years through 2008 through 2018.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 780, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start talking about first what this amendment is not. First of all, it is not a cost increase. CBO has said there will be no cost associated with it. Also, it is not an effort to reestablish the Bureau of Mines at the Department of the Interior. Congress abolished the Bureau of Mines before I came to Congress; but a key component of that agency, the Minerals Information Team, was entrusted to the U.S. Geological Service. Unfortunately, USGS has not recognized the critical nature of this program or the importance of the information the MIT produces.

Today, at USGS, the Mineral Commodity Function is five steps below the USGS Director, and eight steps below the Secretary of the Interior. In contrast, the Energy Information Administrator is only one step below the Secretary of Energy. At DOI Minerals Information, it's just about like being a janitor; you have about that much access into the system.

The Resource Origin and Commodity Knowledge, ROCK, Act, takes the mineral commodity information function away from USGS and creates and funds a stand-alone agency using DOI resources. It restores and funds the function Congress sought to retain and protect in 1995.

Mr. Chairman, I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, this is an amendment that the gentleman continues to push. We had it offered in full committee markup, had debate on it at that time.

When it was offered in committee, I advised him that it did not belong in this bill and perhaps should be considered as a stand-alone piece of legislation after the subject of a hearing. We have not conducted that hearing yet on this matter.

As I said in committee, I do remind my colleagues on the other side that when Newt Gingrich and Company issued their Contract with America, one of its tenets was to reduce the Federal bureaucracy. What the Republican majority ultimately achieved in this regard was the elimination of two Federal entities, the ICC, the Interstate Commerce Commission, which was then recreated as the STB within the Transportation Department. And the other Federal entity that the then-Republican majority eliminated was the Bureau of Mines at the Interior Department.

Now, in a stunning reversal, the Bureau of Mines would essentially be recreated under the guise of a Mineral Commodity Information Agency, I guess you would call that, MCIA. It would enlarge the bureaucracy and increase Federal spending. I repeat, it would enlarge the Federal bureaucracy and increase spending. I keep looking around for my colleague from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE). Where are you when we need you?

The gentleman's amendment would authorize \$30 million a year for this new bureaucracy that the then-Republican majority eliminated when they ran the Congress. This new bureaucracy would have an associated administrator; it would have four assistant administrators; there would be an external affairs office, a public affairs office, even an international affairs office, and who knows how many other offices here and there.

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The budget, financial, human resources offices, the human capital management office, the professional development office, the contract management office, yadda, yadda, yadda, I think you get the picture. So this is a whole lot of bureaucracy that would be created based on a proposal that never had a hearing and that was rejected by the Republicans when they were in the majority.

I urge the defeat of the amendment. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Chairman, the hearings did occur last year on this bill, and I would remind the gentleman from West Virginia that existing resources inside DOI would be used. That

is the reason the CBO said that no additional cost would be required.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE).

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Pearce amendment to H.R. 2262, which establishes the Minerals Commodity Information Administration at the Department of the Interior. The MIT collects and disseminates data on virtually every commercially important nonfuel mineral commodity produced worldwide, information that is critical to businesses, the government, and importantly, the Department of Defense to help manage the National Defense Stockpile. Due to the importance of the data, the MIT should be an independent agency reporting to the Secretary of the Interior.

This information from the MIT is critical to the effective use of the Nation's natural resources and for accurate forecasting. Without a reliable source of worldwide commodity information, the U.S. would be blind to any impending supply shortages.

One of the most fundamental functions of the Federal Government is to provide for the common defense. There is an undeniable nexus between our Nation's minerals policy and national security policy. Currently, 24 strategic and critical military materials are imported at no less than 40 percent from our foreign trading partners. For example, the U.S. imports 54 percent of its magnesium. This mineral is vitally important in constructing airplanes and missiles. Requiring our military to import the strategic and critical minerals it needs from foreign nations, some of whom may be hostile, puts our military at a significant disadvantage and weakens our ability to adequately sustain our national defense.

At a time when defense needs are determined in terms of capabilities-based planning instead of threat-based planning, an accurate assessment of our Nation's minerals is vitally important. The Pearce ROCK Act amendment is a means to that end.

I urge my colleagues to support the Pearce ROCK Act amendment.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I have the right to close, do I not?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. RAHALL. May I inquire as to the time remaining?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from West Virginia has 2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from New Mexico has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. RAHALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Chairman, it is interesting that we did get into the discussion of the CBO here and the additional cost that would be implemented under this act. The underlying act actually has been scored at \$441 million by CBO over 5 years, almost \$100 million a year. I share the gentleman's concern about increasing expenditures, increasing bureaucracy, and would again request that we reconsider the